

Michael F. Easley
Governor



State of North Carolina Office of the Governor

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GOV. EASLEY APPOINTS LEE TO STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

RALEIGH— Gov. Mike Easley today named former State Senator Howard Lee to the State Board of Education. Lee will fill the term of Phillip J. Kirk, who is retiring from the State Board and from his position as Chairman on Thursday, May 1. Kirk served as the chairman of the State Board since 1997.

“Howard Lee brings tremendous experience and leadership to his role on the State Board of Education,” said Easley. “As a leader in education in the General Assembly, Howard Lee has been at the center of our successful school improvement efforts for over a decade. He understands the need for standards and accountability to ensure success in education.”

During his tenure in the state Senate, Lee led efforts to enact legislation on school safety, school accountability and improving teacher quality. He played a leading role in the passage of the 1995 legislation that led to the creation of the ABCs program and the Excellent Schools Act of 1997, which dramatically improved teacher pay and raised standards for teachers.

Lee is a board member of the Southern Regional Education Board, the Education Commission of the States, the North Carolina Science, Mathematics and Technology Education Center, the North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics Foundation, and the Public School Forum of North Carolina.

Lee served in the U.S. Army from 1959-1961. He is a graduate of Fort Valley State College in Georgia and earned his Master's degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He was a member of the research faculty staff and a senior administrator at Duke University from 1966-1976. During that time, his focus was on obstacles to teaching disadvantaged children and on early childhood learning techniques. Lee also served as a visiting professor at North Carolina Central University from 1966-1969, and taught at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill from 1982-1984.

Lee served as Mayor of Chapel Hill from 1969-1975. From 1977-1981, he served as the Secretary for the Department of Environment, Health and Natural Resources. Lee was elected to the North Carolina Senate in 1990, where he served for 10 years (1990-1994; 1996-2002). As a state senator, Lee served as Co-Chairman of Appropriations and Co-Chair (Vice-Chair) of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Education and Higher Education. In addition, he served on the Joint Legislative Commission on Government Operations Education/Human Resources Subcommittee and Co-Chaired the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee.

The North Carolina State Board of Education supervises and administers the public school system and the education funds provided for its support. There are 13 members on the board who serve eight-year terms. The Lieutenant Governor and the State Treasurer serve on the board, and the Governor appoints 11 members.

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